

I. INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles Community College District and West Los Angeles College in the County of Los Angeles are proposing to adopt a College Facilities Master Plan (FMP) to guide campus development through 2022. At that time it is projected that 18,904 students will be enrolled at the College. The Facilities Master Plan is available for review at the College library or available for download from the College's website at www.wlac.edu/MP2003. The number of annual full-time-equivalent (FTE) students is projected to be 15,342.¹ It is projected that by 2022, there will be 1,248 headcount employees or the full time equivalent of 813. The primary purpose of the FMP is to guide the physical development of the WLAC campus in achieving its academic goals.

West Los Angeles College Integrated Master Plan

The Facilities Master Plan is one of three components of the WLAC Integrated Master Plan. The other components are the Education Master Plan and the Information Technology Plan. The entire Integrated Master Plan is founded on a commitment to achieving the highest levels of student learning and success. As an educational institution, WLAC recognizes learning as an intrinsically valuable and transforming human experience.

The Education Master Plan outlines an integrated approach to creating a highly effective learning organization that serves all of WLAC's students and achieves the core outcomes that define success for the College. These include: optimal enrollment levels, persistence from semester to semester, retention of students, course success, transfer to four-year colleges, vocational advancement, and students' personal and civic development.

An educational environment depends on communication and information distribution to thrive. For this reason, Information Technology (IT) is an essential function in an educational community like WLAC. The Information Technology Plan integrates an IT strategy that is driven by the visions and goals of educational, organizational facility planning to create a more effective implementation of technology that complements and supports College-wide initiatives.

The Facilities Master Plan provides broad parameters for organizing the growth and development of the College. It details, in physical form, the recommendations of the Educational Plan for needed academic and support space. The FMP also recommends the utility and traffic infrastructure needs to support such growth and presents Design Guidelines as the link between the land use-oriented FMP and the design of individual buildings.

Los Angeles Community College District

The Los Angeles Community College District is the largest community college district in the country. Comprised of nine campuses, it serves an area of 800 square miles in more than 100 cities. Its member colleges educate more than 130,000 students annually. These students come from diverse populations. Over 80% are from ethnic minorities. The LACCD educates three times as many Latino students and four times as many African American students as all of the University of California campuses combined. Community colleges transfer programs are among the most successful in the state: 60% of all California State University and 30% of University of California graduates started at a community college.²

West Los Angeles College

Opened in 1969, the College serves the communities of Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Century City, Crenshaw, Culver City, La Tijera/Windsor Hills, Marina del Rey, Mar Vista, Pacific Palisades, Palms, Playa del Rey, Venice, Westchester, West Los Angeles and Westwood. In the spring of 2002, 9,287 students, (6,436 FTE) were enrolled in

¹ A method of student workload measurement used for comparison analysis. The LACCD considers 525 hours to be the number of instructional hours of one student taking five 3-unit courses for two primary terms. Therefore, a student who receives 262.5 instructional hours would have a full-time equivalence of 0.5. In other words, the student is equivalent to half a full-time student.

² Source: Los Angeles Community College District website, <http://marlin.laccd.edu/district>, visited March 14, 2003.

the College. Currently the campus has 516 employees (334 FTE), including faculty, staff, and administrators. The Los Angeles Metropolitan area, in which the College is situated, influences the College as its demographic, economic, social and political description changes. The area experiences high demands for housing. The growing population and diverse service area are considerations for the campus' future growth. In order to accommodate the needs of the community and create opportunities for future students, the College plans to expand the existing campus, as discussed in the Facilities Master Plan.

Proposition A

On April 10, 2001, Proposition A was approved by 67% of the electorate, surpassing the 55% needed for passage. Proposition A provides for a \$1.245 billion facilities bond to be used to construct new buildings and modernize existing facilities on all nine of the Los Angeles Community College District's campuses. The bond is intended to "increase educational opportunities, raise student achievement and improve health and safety conditions at Los Angeles City College, East Los Angeles College, Los Angeles Harbor College, Los Angeles Mission College, Los Angeles Pierce College, Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, Los Angeles Valley College, and West Los Angeles College..." The monies from the bond are to be used to replace or repair deteriorating buildings; construct, furnish, and equip classrooms, laboratories, libraries and related facilities; repair/upgrade electrical wiring for computer technology, heating, air conditioning and plumbing; complete earthquake retrofitting; improve campus safety, fire security, parking and lighting; and improve/acquire real property to relieve overcrowding. Bond funds are not to be used for administrative staff or faculty salaries.

To ensure that Proposition A requirements are met, the LACCD has established an independent District-wide Citizen's Oversight Committee and a College Citizens' Committee at each college. As provided in Education Code Section 15278, the role of the District Citizens' Oversight Committee is to inform the public concerning the District's expenditure of bond revenues. To carry out this role, the Committee reviews annual performance audits, annual financial audits, deferred maintenance plans, cost saving measures proposed by the LACCD and inspects college facilities and grounds. The role of the West Los Angeles College Citizens' Committee is to advise the District Citizens' Oversight Committee regarding the District's expenditure of bond revenues on the specific projects that are planned for the WLAC.

West Los Angeles College has been allocated \$111 million of the \$1.245 billion bond measure. The Facilities Management Plan has been developed for the College to set forth the vision, commitment and objectives of the College, not only in its use of these funds, but for the long-term development of the campus.

Proposition AA

On May 20, 2003, Proposition AA was approved by 64% of the electorate, surpassing the 55% needed for passage. Proposition AA provides for a \$980 million facilities bond to be used to provide additional funds to construct new buildings and modernize existing facilities on all nine of the Los Angeles Community College District's campuses. Like Proposition A, monies from the bond are to be used to replace or repair deteriorating buildings; construct, furnish, and equip classrooms, laboratories, libraries and related facilities; repair/upgrade electrical wiring for computer technology, heating, air conditioning and plumbing; complete earthquake retrofitting; improve campus safety, fire security, parking and lighting; and improve/acquire real property to relieve overcrowding. Bond funds are not to be used for administrative staff or faculty salaries.

West Los Angeles College has not been allocated any specific amount of the \$980 million bond measure. The College will utilize whatever funds are allocated to partially fund Phase II of the Facilities Management Plan.

CEQA Noticing and Process

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) when there is substantial evidence that a project may have a significant effect on the environment. The purpose of an EIR is to provide decision makers, State and local agencies and the general public with detailed

information on the potentially significant environmental effects which a proposed project is likely to have and to list ways which the significant environmental effects may be minimized and indicate alternatives to the project. Additionally, CEQA requires that an EIR identify those adverse impacts determined to be significant after mitigation.

The EIR for the West Los Angeles College Facilities Master Plan is a combined Project / Program EIR. A Project EIR examines the environmental effects of a specific development project while a Program EIR is described as an EIR “which may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either geographically, as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions, in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program...” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168). Under CEQA, specific projects proposed under the Master Plan may rely on the Program EIR as the base environmental document for environmental review. Subsequent projects in the Master Plan must be examined in light of the Program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared. If the lead agency finds that the subsequent activity would not result in new effects or require new mitigation measures, the lead agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by the Program EIR and no new environmental document would be required (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168).

The project proposal was reviewed by the Los Angeles Community College District (serving as Lead Agency), an Initial Study was prepared, and it was determined that the Project required the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was therefore issued for the Project on January 7, 2003 to solicit comments on the proposed content of the EIR. A Public Scoping Meeting was held on January 21, 2003. At this meeting the FMP was discussed in an open house format and comments were taken on the environmental impacts of the proposed Project. However, based upon comments received on the NOP and refinements to the FMP, the Lead Agency prepared and circulated a new NOP on February 18, 2003. Another Public Scoping Meeting was held on March 5, 2003. Both NOPs were circulated for a period of at least 30 days. All comments received on the NOPs relating to the EIR were reviewed and incorporated to the extent relevant and feasible in this EIR.

This Draft EIR is now being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 60 days, 15 days longer than required under CEQA, in order to provide ample review time. During this period, comments from the general public, organizations, and agencies on environmental issues raised in the DEIR and the DEIR’s accuracy and completeness may be submitted to the Lead Agency at the following address:

West Los Angeles College
9000 Overland Avenue
Culver City, California 90230
Attn. Dr. Jocelyn Towler

Comments on the DEIR should be submitted in writing and delivered to the above address by 5pm on the last day of the public review period identified in the Notice of Availability attached to this DEIR. Upon completion of the public review period, a Final EIR (FEIR) will be prepared that will include the comments on the DEIR as well as responses to those comments. This DEIR and the FEIR will comprise the EIR for the proposed project

Organization of the EIR

Section I - Introduction, of this EIR identifies the lead agency and provides an introduction to the Project and Proposition A. It provides a brief overview of the history of the WLAC, CEQA environmental review process, and a description of the organization of the EIR.

Section II of this EIR provides an executive summary of detailed information contained in subsequent sections. It includes a description of the project; areas of known controversy; alternatives considered; and identifies by environmental issue the significance determination, mitigation measures, cumulative impacts, and significance after mitigation for those impacts.

Section III of this EIR provides a description of the project. It identifies the facilities proposed under the FMP by location, size, and implementation phase. This section identifies three potential location alternatives for a second access road to the campus. Additionally, this section identifies project objectives, project approvals, and intended uses of the EIR.

Section IV of this EIR provides a description of the baseline environmental conditions in the vicinity and at the proposed project site at the time of the issuance of the NOP. It also identifies related projects in the project area.

Section V of this EIR describes the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The discussion in this section is organized by environmental issue area including aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils/seismicity, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, public services, recreation and parks, transportation and traffic, and utilities. Each issue discussion is organized into six subsections as described below:

Existing Conditions: This section describes the existing conditions and environmental setting in the project vicinity as it pertains to the specific environmental issue.

Threshold of Significance: This section defines the criteria for determining whether an impact of the project is considered significant.

Project Impacts: This section provides an analysis of the proposed project, including the identification and evaluation of direct and indirect impacts, as appropriate that may occur during construction or operation. This section also discusses whether or not these environmental effects meet or exceed the established threshold of significance.

Mitigation Measures: This section identifies potentially feasible mitigations that would avoid or substantially reduce significant adverse project-related impacts.

Significant Project Impacts After Mitigation: This section discusses the environmental effects of the proposed project after the implementation of the identified mitigation measures and indicates whether or not the resulting impact has been reduced to a less than significant level.

Cumulative Impacts: This section addresses the potentially significant cumulative impacts that may result from the proposed project when taking into account the environmental impacts of other reasonably foreseeable past, present, and future projects.

Section VI of this EIR provides a discussion of the No Project Alternative as well as other alternatives to the proposed project. Based on the alternatives analysis, an environmentally superior alternative is designated among the alternatives. CEQA requires that if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, then the EIR shall identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.

Section VII of the EIR discusses the significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented. This will be based upon the analysis provided in Section V. Additionally, this section discusses the irreversible environmental changes that could occur as a result of construction or operation of the proposed project.

Section VIII of the EIR describes the potential for the proposed project to foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing either directly or indirectly in the surrounding environment.

Section IX provides a list of contacts and references consulted during preparation of the EIR as well as identifies the preparers of this EIR.

Appendices follow Section IX.